

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 10 October 2016
Report of: Head of Community & Customer Services
Title: Investment in Watford's Adventure Playgrounds

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for investment in two of the Council's Adventure Playgrounds at Harwoods and Harebreaks to create high quality, modern, creative and challenging Adventure Playgrounds with improved accessibility.
- 1.2 Funding for significant capital investment of up to £1.4 million into the Adventure Playgrounds has been made available by the Council for these new facilities, which will be open to all at all times.
- 1.3 The new Adventure Playground facilities will be designed so that they can be used without supervision. The current staff presence will be withdrawn, which will help the council achieve the significant revenue savings it is required to make.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Having had full regard to the content of this report, including comments and views expressed by members of the public and users of the current service and having regard to the attached equality impact analysis, and the implications for crime and disorder, that the outline design plans for the investment of up to £1.4 million into the two Adventure Playgrounds be approved.
- 2.2 That Cabinet ratifies the service of termination notices on the Adventure Playground staff issued on 26 August 2016 and that the current staffed service be terminated with effect from 31 October 2016.
- 2.3 That play activities be commissioned for the 2 week Easter break and for 6 weeks in the summer.
- 2.4 That the new adventurous play areas be opened for public use in Spring 2017.
- 2.5 That an additional £150,000 be added to the capital programme of £1.25m for this project.

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Report approved by: Alan Gough- Head of Customer and Community Services

3.0 **Detailed Proposal**

Background

- 3.1 At its meeting on 4 July 2016 Cabinet considered a report setting out proposals to invest £1.25m in the council's two Adventure Playgrounds at Harwoods and Harebreaks (APGs). The proposal was approved and the decision was subsequently called-in and considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 21 July 2016, who ratified the Cabinet's decision.
- 3.2 Following this the council received a letter from solicitors acting on behalf of a parent whose children use the APGs seeking to challenge the decision on a number of grounds. Whilst the council is of the opinion that a number of the issues that it has been challenged on are without merit it is considered prudent for the matter to be brought back before Cabinet for a fresh decision.
- 3.3 The council provides the APGs under a discretionary power in section 19 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976. Section 19(1) allows a local authority to provide such recreational facilities as it thinks fit, including amongst other things premises, equipment and staff.
- 3.4 The council is not the Education Authority or Social Services Authority for the Borough, this is Hertfordshire County Council and, therefore, it has no statutory duties in relation to the provision of facilities for children and young people and neither does it operate the APGs on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council.
- 3.5 The council has however always recognised that play is an important factor to a child's development and has made considerable investment in many local play facilities across the Borough using its discretionary power under s19. It is proposed that this investment be now extended to the APGs.
- 3.6 The current facilities at both APGs are in need of modernisation and current accessibility to the facilities is restricted to specific opening times. These are:

Summer opening (April to October)

Harebreaks:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday

- Term time: 3.30pm - 6pm
- School holidays: 10am - 5pm

Tuesday

- Closed

Saturday and Sunday

- Term time: 11am - 5pm
- School holidays: 11am - 5pm

Harwoods:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

- Term time: 3.20pm - 6pm
- School holidays: 10am - 5pm

Wednesday

- Closed

Saturday and Sunday

- Term time: 11am to 5pm
- School holidays: 11am - 5pm

Winter opening (November to March)

During the winter months, the APGs opening has been reduced from six to four days a week and opening hours have also been reduced as set out below:

Harebreaks

Monday & Thursday

- Term time: 3.30pm – 5.30pm
- School holidays: 12.30 – 3pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

- Closed

Saturday and Sunday

- Term time: 11.30am - 4pm
- School holidays: 11.30am - 4pm

Harwoods

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday

- Closed

Tuesday & Friday

- Term time: 3.20pm – 5.30pm
- School holidays: 12.30 – 3pm

Saturday and Sunday

- Term time: 11.30am - 4pm
- School holidays: 11.30am - 4pm

- 3.7 The APGs are staffed at these opening times and these staff also provide Play Ranger services to the community at various locations throughout the year. Analysis of attendance figures show that the current take up of the facilities is focused on the local community with reach to other areas of the borough more limited. User registration from 2014 is mapped in the equality impact analysis (EIA) associated with this report: Appendix A

3.8 The reduction and then removal of the Revenue Support Grant by Central Government means that the council has to make savings in its revenue expenditure of approximately £3m by April 2019. When this requirement is balanced against a council desire to create an improved play offer that is high quality, modern, sustainable and more accessible, a transformational change is required.

3.9 This transformational change should not be seen as a reflection on the current Play Services provided. The attendance figures for the period January – June 2016 are shown in Appendix D.

4.0 **The Proposal**

4.1 A company called Southern Green was commissioned to provide design possibilities for the two APGs, with a brief including:

- making the Adventure Playgrounds accessible at all times, for ages 5 – 15 years
- modern, innovative and challenging play experiences
- designs to take into account health and safety guidance
- play areas to be durable and sustainable and equipment to have a 20 year lifespan
- providing a destination for families from across the borough
- specifically in relation to Harebreaks to work with the existing natural environment

4.2 This has given rise to the outline designs shown at appendix B. Please note that these are still only outline proposals and are still subject to change.

4.3 In summary:

Harwoods Adventure Playground will be a number of play zones which encourage different types of adventurous play opportunities in different environments:

- a welcoming space for families gathering together, seating, and play equipment for younger children so that there is a full family offer provided
- a climbing wall
- an iconic tower with aerial tunnel, slides, and bridge
- adventure trail challenges
- double zip wire
- exciting swing area and natural play areas

This all to be integrated and linked to the existing MUGA and other outdoor areas. The whole area will be connected by a landscaping scheme including new planting and walkways. It will be necessary to remove some trees from this site in consultation with the Council's Arboricultural Officer.

4.4 For Harebreaks Adventure playground the same design criteria remain, however the proposals are tailored to the existing habitat. The play zones will include:

- a welcoming space for families gathering together,
- woodland transition, to encourage and intrigue visitors to venture within the woodland
- an iconic tower with aerial tunnel, slides, and walkway
-
- some of the former play area reverting back to a more natural habitat.

Again this will be linked to existing outdoor areas such as the existing playground.

- 4.5 The above proposals are innovative, challenging and creative and represent an investment in play which continues to add value and experiences to children's lives. These proposals are transformational and can be enjoyed all year round by children and families. Examples of some of the specific equipment at each site are in Appendix C.
- 4.6 The above investment of up to £1.4m will create APGs that are not restricted to specific opening hours and do not require staffing. It is proposed that in addition, play activities will be commissioned for the 2 week Easter break and for 6 weeks in the summer. These activities will support use of the two new APGs, Watford's parks and open spaces, the Big Events programme and other locations.
- 4.7 Regular inspection and maintenance of the new APGs will become part of the contract with Veolia. Appropriate signage will be placed at the entrances to the APGs welcoming visitors and advising on use of the equipment.

5.0 Considerations

- 5.1 The council has not undertaken any formal consultation on the proposals with either users of the current APGs or the wider public. The council is under no statutory duty to consult as it is exercising a discretionary power which does not require consultation, and having regard to the nature and likely effect of the proposals it is not considered that this is an exceptional case where non-statutory consultation is required. It has, however, undertaken formal consultation with staff affected by the proposal as an employer.
- 5.2 Although the council has not carried out a formal consultation exercise, staff were notified of the proposals on 23 June 2016 prior to the publication of the Cabinet agenda for the 4 July meeting and all registered users were also notified of the proposals and of the Cabinet meeting by letter dated 23 June 2016.
- 5.3 As a result the council has received e-mails, letters, a petition and representations made by members of the public to both Cabinet and call-in and from staff all questioning the withdrawal of the supervisory element of the APGs - copies of the communications from members of the public will be made available to Cabinet members before the 10 October meeting. After the Cabinet decision the council also held two drop in sessions on 9 and 11 July 2016 to show the community the proposed new equipment and took the proposed designs to the APGs on 16 August (Harwoods) and 18 August (Harebreaks) to allow the current users see what is being proposed as well as to gather suggestions and feedback on

potential activities for the Easter and summer holiday programmes.

5.4 The following is a summary of the representations that have been received from the public by the council since 23 June 2016. Copies of the representations received will be made available to Cabinet members before the 10 October meeting. These were received by: the Elected Mayor of Watford, Partnerships and Performance Section Head and the Community and Customer Services department, which is responsible for the delivery of the current play service. The representations were made by email, phone call and by letter. A number followed the distribution of a letter to the parents/carers of registered users (dated 23 June 2016) and a follow up leaflet (dated 1 July 2016). There were 1,503 email addresses on the mailing list used.

Number of representations received: emails – 15 , phone calls – 3, letters – 5

Number of objections: 22

Number in support: 0

Number where specific question raised: 1

The points that have been raised and officer responses are summarised below.

- Against closure of supervised provision:
- Officer comment: whilst it is recognised that the proposal will end supervised play as currently provided, the investment in new, exciting play equipment will deliver an improved play offer with a wider appeal to local young people with the aim of attracting a broad range of ages and abilities. Furthermore, the proposals for Easter and summer activities mean that young people will still be able to access free play activities.
The annual cost of the current Play Service is approximately £375,000, excluding support service and other costs. The council must find significant savings in its day to day expenditure and these proposals would allow it to enhance the layout and equipment of the APGs using capital funds, which would then be available for use all year round, while helping to reduce revenue pressure on other critical areas of council expenditure.
- Lack of public consultation:
- Officer comment: this is covered in 5.1 of this report.
- Concern over loss of a free service:
- Officer comment: the APGs will continue to be free to use as will be the Easter and summer activities programme. The loss of supervision is the result of the council having to make hard choices at a time of reduced funding.
- Impact on community/social cost of closure:
- Officer Comment: the proposed investment secures play at both Harwoods and Harebreaks and so they will continue to be a focus for play activity for 5-15 year olds within their respective communities. The aim of upgrading the sites is to encourage a greater take up by young people, which will enhance a wider sense of community

across the borough. The proposed Easter and summer activities will be developed to target areas where a demand is identified and will be tailored to meet the needs of young people. These activities will be at a time when young people are not in school and will ensure that they and their parents/carers continue to have options on how they spend this free time.

- Impact on local young people of loss of current service:
- Officer comment: all young people currently using the APGs will be able to access the new provision from spring 2017 and so their opportunity to play, meet other young people and engage in shared activities will not be lost. As outlined above, the Easter and summer programme will take into account the areas identified by young people as being of interest and which they would, therefore, wish to take part in. This could include activities which challenge the young people in terms of adventurous play and those which they would not usually have an opportunity to enjoy without an element of organisation and encouragement. In terms of vulnerable young people, this is the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council, which works with schools and other agencies to identify and manage issues relating to safeguarding.

- Loss of free supervision/childcare:
- Officer comment: the current service was designed to offer play opportunities for young people rather than childcare provision. Childcare is not a responsibility of a district authority and there is provision available from other agencies and organisations in Watford for parents and carers, which has been set up to meet these specific requirements. The council can signpost parents and carers to appropriate childcare services if this is requested.

- Impact on Harebreaks Wood:
- Officer comment: as part of the development of the designs for both sites, an ecological analysis was undertaken by independent specialists. This has informed the plans/designs and ensures that there is no significant ecological impact on the Wood. Issues considered included key/significant trees (none of which are being removed), bats and woodland fauna.

- Anti-social behaviour and community safety related issues:
- Officer comment: this is covered in 5.6 of this report

- Design of new provision including loss of character and current popular equipment:
- Officer comment: drawing on best practice from around the country, the equipment within the proposed design has been chosen to maximise appeal and excitement for young people as well as providing appropriate challenge for the age range and for differing abilities. Each site has been designed with its own 'character' and to fit into its immediate surroundings. This means more of an urban design for Harwoods, with Harebreaks taking on a woodland and more natural character in keeping with its setting

- Maintenance cost of new equipment:
- Officer comment: a budget of £25k for maintenance has been identified and the works will be included in the Council's contract Veolia, which is responsible for the

maintenance of play areas across the borough

- Volunteering opportunity lost:
- Officer comment: there are a significant number of volunteering opportunities in Watford, including working with young people. Watford and Three Rivers Trust would be able to provide this information if required
- Impact on staff:
- Officer comment: consultation with staff was carried out from 11 July to 8 August 2016. The main feedback related to the impact on the current users and any who are potentially vulnerable. This is covered earlier in this report. Furthermore, two members of staff were involved in the development of the alternative business case/model outlined below.

A petition was presented to the Mayor at Cabinet on 4 July. It was also available online. As of 20 September, this had 1,888 signatures. The petition was titled: 'Stop the proposal to replace staffed Adventure Play Services with fixed equipment parks'.

- Officer comment: the reasons for the recommendation to replace the current supervised service are detailed throughout this report as are the proposals for investing in fixed equipment and the benefits of upgrading the playgrounds and providing greater access throughout the year.

Save Watford Playgrounds (SWAP) submitted its own representation to Call-In Committee on 21 July 2016.

- Officer comment: The SWAP submission raised a number of points, relevant to the proposal, for consideration:
 - Lack of public consultation:
Officer comment: this is covered in 5.1 of this report
 - Long term impact on crime and anti-social behaviour for local communities:
Officer comment: this is covered in 5.6 of this report
 - Consequences for marginalised and disenfranchised communities in Watford
Officer comment: the new play provision is designed to attract a much wider range of users and remains free to users as does the proposed programme of Easter and summer activities. The latter can be tailored to meet the needs of the young people in the borough within the 5-15 years age range, including those with disability and other specific needs. In addition, the programme will ensure it reflects the town's diversity and will identify the key locations where activities will be most appropriate
 - Information to local communities relating to the closure of staffed play services:
Officer comment: the claim was that the council literature sent to parents/carers did not make clear that the new provision would not be staffed. However, the letter dated 23 June 2016 stated: *the new offer does mean that the current, supervised service will end from October 2016* and the leaflet sent on 1 July: *These new facilities are designed so that there isn't a need for staff*

to supervise children's play at Harwoods and Harebreaks. The fact that both sites remain dedicated to young people's play is seen as continuing the commitment at Harwoods and Harebreaks to play.

- Conflicting strategic planning for the maintenance and development of play areas and the protection of green spaces:
Officer comment: the proposal does not conflict with the council's Green Spaces Strategy. Both sites remain designated open spaces
- Under-investment in the current APGs through use of S106 funds:
Officer comment: The current proposal has identified £1.4million investment for the playgrounds. This is capital funding rather than revenue funding, and it is the in the latter that the council is facing pressure on its finances. The proposal generates an annual saving to the council of £250k, which will help it meet savings targets necessitated by government cuts.
- Incorrect calculation of the £250k savings figure:
Officer comment: This saving figure is within the council's medium term financial strategy and is accurate and achievable.
- Comment on involvement of Watford Community Housing Trust:
Officer comment: This was not relevant to the APG proposal.

In addition, a business case (dated 9 August 2016) was presented by staff and users during the staff consultation outlining a proposal to retain the APG provision by the setting up of a body managed by some of the existing staff and others with expertise in the play profession. Council officers undertook an analysis of this business model and are of the opinion that, primarily on the grounds of financial viability, it is not something they would recommend the council pursue. The business model required the council to provide revenue funding of £300k for the first three years of operation under the assumption that the council could use the capital funding identified to deliver its proposals to support the alternative business model instead. Under financial regulations, capital funding cannot be used to support revenue spending. The business model would have also meant the council would not achieve the £250k revenue saving identified in its proposals. Given its need to find a further £3million worth of savings by 2020, the council would need to find a further £750k over the next three years in addition to this sum in order to meet financial targets.

5.5 Officers have undertaken an equalities impact analysis (EIA) which is appended to this report. The EIA addresses the council's public sector equality duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 and is intended to assist the council to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- **eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act**

The EIA considers the possibility that the withdrawal of staff from the APGs may lead to increased discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other conduct prohibited by the Act. It notes that measures are in place to deal with these behaviours should they arise within the new playgrounds and also highlights the need for the proposed holiday activity programmes to clearly set out expectations in terms of behaviours and actions. All the borough's outdoor play areas are monitored by the Park Ranger service (managed by Veolia) and the rangers can deal with issues as they arise and as notified. Where incidents

are of a more serious nature, the borough has a very effective, multi-agency approach to tackling anti-social behaviour, which has seen incidents fall significantly over recent years. Any issues that would be deemed anti-social behaviour would be reported through the council's Community Safety Co-ordinator. Organisations and individuals commissioned to run and manage the Easter and summer holiday activities would be expected to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to equalities and the duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- **advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) and persons who do not**

The opportunity provided by the investment means that both APGs can be designed to maximise accessibility for children of all ages. This will include not just the equipment installed but also the pathways and access to and around the site. The provision remains free and so there is no barrier created through affordability. By creating stimulating, challenging and enjoyable play opportunities within safe, well-maintained environments, the council will be providing a service that will appeal to young people across all the protected characteristics.

The play activities commissioned during the Easter and summer holidays will reflect the need to be accessible and to cater for a wide range of young people and abilities. In terms of young people with disability, this will include both physical and learning disabilities. In addition, these activities will be designed to meet the needs and reflect Watford's diverse community. Locations for these activities are yet to be confirmed but they will need to take into account areas which will advance equality of opportunity in terms of diverse neighbourhoods with a high number of young people.

Parents and carers who currently make use of the supervised service will be affected by its withdrawal. As parents and carers with responsibility for children during the day tend to be women, they are likely to be disproportionately affected, as are parents from lower-income households. However, there are other child care services in the borough which the council can direct users to, and during the Easter and summer holidays the council will arrange for a programme of free play activities

- **foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it**

The changes to the playgrounds will broaden the offer available to young people from 5-15 year olds and their families/ carers. By providing facilities 24/7 throughout the year there will be more opportunity for young people to use the facilities and to engage with each other through play. As shown in the analysis of registrations there is a strong correlation between registered users of the facilities compared with the overall population of 5-15 year olds. The aim of the upgraded facilities will be to appeal to a far broader range of young people from across the borough thus meeting the duty to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not.

The quality and range of equipment on offer will also broaden the APGs appeal and encourage greater usage from across the borough – ultimately providing a ‘go to’ destination for young people and their families. The proposed designs include integrated picnic areas, a meeting space with seating, which will provide more opportunities for families to gather and be part of the new experience.

- 5.6 As Cabinet will note from the objections/comments set out in 5.4 above there have been concerns expressed about the implications for crime and disorder by removing a supervised APG and installing equipment that is unsupervised and accessible 24/7.

The council has a public duty under s 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 set out as follows:

“(1) Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent

- (a) crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- (c) re-offending in its area.”

Officers would comment that the council has in the region of 52 play areas and 29 parks, gardens and recreations grounds and playing pitches across the borough plus a skate park, all unsupervised. There is no evidence that unsupervised play areas of themselves are a cause of crime and disorder. Whilst some open spaces sometimes have incidents of alcohol and drugs misuse, whenever an area in the borough is seen to be a reporting hot spot for the misuse of alcohol and/or drugs, specific operations are used to deal with and end the identified activity at that location. The Council has a well established community safety action group involving neighbourhood policing and community safety experts that address and prevent issues of re-offending, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

The previously raised issue of the removal of fencing and formal boundaries leading to increased drug taking /dealing are not borne out by police mapping for such activities.

The council’s Community Safety Coordinator has also advised:

“all new play equipment/areas or facilities in parks are targeted by vandals in their construction phase. Notable are the instance of arson during the pre- opening or just opened phase, with slides and swings, because of their composite material, being the primary targets. Consideration should be given to the use of CCTV through the construction and initial use phase of the new provision, as experience shows once this time of change has finished the equipment’s presence is normalised and serious attacks on it cease”.

This recommendation will be considered within the project plan.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 Despite the fact that the council has not formally consulted on this proposal, it has been

widely publicised and a number of comments have been received. The substance of these has been set out in this report. Officers have had regard to the council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to the implications for Crime and Disorder. Officers are of the view that to continue with the existing supervised service is not sustainable. The council is facing increasing pressure on its limited financial resources and will need to find approximately £3m of revenue savings by April 2019. By making this significant capital investment in adventurous play equipment and making it open and easily accessible the council is continuing to make provision for play whilst having regard to maximising the best use of its resources. Cabinet is asked to approve the recommendations.

7.0 **Implications**

7.1 **Financial**

7.1.1 The Head of Finance (shared services) comments that resources have been allocated in the capital programme 2016/17 to deliver the investment proposals of up to £1.25 million, with an additional £150,000 to be requested as part of the budget setting process. Savings of up to £250,000 per annum will be delivered from the Play Service revenue budget from April 2017. The costs of redundancies (where applicable) will be recovered from the savings within the first 12 months following the redundancies. Once agreed, service budgets will be adjusted to reflect the savings.

The cost of ongoing maintenance of the two playgrounds has been identified from existing budgets.

7.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

7.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that as stated in the main body of the report the provision of recreational facilities by the council is a discretionary power under s19 Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 and not a statutory duty. The Council is not the Education Authority, nor the Social Services Authority; that is Hertfordshire County Council. The council has no statutory requirement to consult either users or the wider public when determining how to exercise its discretion under s19.

In any event users and the wider public have informed the council of their views and these are set out in the report for members to consider.

The Council has complied with its employment policies with respect to affected staff.

The Council has also carried out an equalities impact analysis and has had due regard to the effects of this proposal on its equality duties and crime and disorder as set out in the report.

7.3 **Equalities and Human Rights**

7.3.1 Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act 2010 the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

In order to have regard to the council's obligations under s149, officers have undertaken an equalities impact analysis, which is appended (Appendix A).

Cabinet is asked to consider the public sector equality duty (see 5.5) and the EIA. Officers would particularly draw members' attention to the identified positive impact of broadening the play offer for 5-15 year olds in terms of fostering good community relations by bringing together a higher proportion of the borough's young people in this age range (currently around 12,000 young people) through shared play experiences. The EIA also recognises the importance of the commissioned play activities for the Easter and summer holidays in terms of meeting the needs of Watford's diverse community and, in particular, for young people with disabilities (both physical and learning) and from black and minority ethnic communities. The change from the current play provision has potential negative impacts or risks for current registered users. These include: the loss of supervised play; potential issues around ASB/criminal behaviour at the sites; and the risk of the specific needs of some users not being taken into consideration when developing the transformed play service. The EIA notes that alternative supervised play activities and childcare are available within Watford and these need to be signposted to parents/carers as appropriate. As in 5.5, the EIA has regard to the Council's successful approach to tackling ASB (which might also constitute discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct as set out in the Equality Act 2010) and more serious criminal behaviour, should these occur within and in the vicinity of the two sites once they are re-opened. The impact on users with specific needs will be addressed through the final design stage of the upgraded plans and, as outlined, above the commissioned services should be accessible to all abilities and ethnic groups, and will be at locations where young people will be able to attend and there is an identified need and demand.

7.3.2 Officers do not consider that the proposals in this report engage the Convention rights of any users of the APGs to any significant degree. Even if there was an interference with the rights of users under Article 8 of the Convention (right to respect for the individual's private and family life), it is considered that the interference would be slight, in accordance with the law and proportionate.

7.4 **Potential Risks**

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Costs exceed budget	1	4	4
Future revenue savings not achieved	1	4	4
Designs not implemented in time	1	3	3

7.5 **Staffing**

7.5.1 All current play staff have been consulted in accordance with the council's redundancy restructure and reorganisation policy and notices to terminate their employment were served on 26 August 2016. All staff have been offered outplacement support. A post will be created to continue the commissioning of play activities and provide resilience to the Culture and Play section in responding to future challenges.

7.5.2 In the event the Cabinet decides not to proceed with the proposals in this report the Council will need to consult with affected staff on mutually agreeing that the redundancy notices will be withdrawn.

7.6 **Accommodation**

7.6.1 There are no accommodation implications. The new post will be located at Watford Town Hall.

7.7 **Community Safety**

7.7.1 The council has had regard to the implications of the proposals on crime and disorder and community safety as set out in paragraph 5.6 above

7.8 **Sustainability**

7.8.1 The equipment will have a 20 year lifespan.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equalities impact analysis

Appendix B - Overview of the designs for Harwoods APG

Appendix C – Overview of the designs for Harebreaks APG

Appendix D – Attendance figures

Background Papers:

- letters, e-mails and petition from users, Cabinet report 4 July 2016, overview and scrutiny call-in report 21 July 2016

- ecological assessments for Harwoods and Harebreaks